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We are not aware that Oriel windows are found in any building in the United States ; and yet nothing can be more ornamental to the exterior, or contribute more to render the rooms agreeable. The effect of these beautiful windows, which project from the front of the house, something like the large shop windows, may be seen in all views of English cottages and ancient halls. They abound, too, in the college buildings at Oxford and Cambridge, and form a remarkable feature in the beautiful domestic architecture of that country. These windows might be adopted in our houses without any great expense, and we think would be found more convenient, and certainly much more beautiful, than the bows in front of many buildings. A row of oriel windows, projecting from the second stories of the houses in Park Street, for instance, would have a very picturesque effect.

We conclude with exhorting all house-builders to "fling away ambition" ; to contrive their houses with a view to comfort rather than show, and to take special care that the proportions be not so great, and the cost so extravagant, as to gain for their edifices the unenviable name of "Follies."

ART. IV. — 1. *Melanie and Other Poems*. By N. P. WILLIS. Edited by Barry Cornwall. London ; Saunders and Otley, Conduit Street. 1835. 16mo. pp. 232.

2. *Pencillings by the Way*. By N. P. WILLIS, Esq., Author of "Melanie," The "Slingsby" Papers, &c. 2 vols. 12mo. Philadelphia ; Carey, Lea, and Blanchard. 1836.

3. *Inklings of Adventure*. By the Author of "Pencillings by the Way." New York ; Saunders and Otley. 1836.

THE author of these works began his literary career very early in life. While yet a student at New Haven, he was known throughout the United States as one of our most promising and brilliant poets ; and it has been supposed by some, that his early celebrity was of serious disadvantage to his after progress in the noble art, to which his

boyhood was devoted. Certain it is, that no author, belonging to our yet forming literature, has been pursued with more indiscriminate abuse, on the one hand, or more ill-judged applause, on the other. To withstand the united influence of partial friends and eager foes ; to bear the intoxicating draught of flattery without reeling, and the bitter cup of unbounded hostility without despair ; and to go on, in calmness and serenity, with the cultivation of poetry, trusting to the just awards of a coming generation, is what few men of any age, certainly no young man can be expected to do. And yet the still increasing catalogue of Mr. Willis's works proves that he is going right onward, without " bating a jot of heart or hope."

The volume of poems, published by him in England, in 1835, is one of great and various interest. It is introduced to the English public by Mr. Proctor, better known in this country by the assumed name of Barry Cornwall, whose own poems, for sweetness, melody, and delicacy, stand among the foremost of the present English literature. Barry Cornwall's preface, though liable to some criticism in a literary point of view, is written in a tone and temper which will command the approbation of every American. Blackwood's Magazine treats it with a ferocity for which we are utterly at a loss to conceive an adequate motive. Probably some political or personal antipathy lies at the bottom of it.

The poems in this volume are divided into three parts, each part being inscribed to some English friend of the author. It consists of several new poems, the longest of which are "Melanie," and a dramatic sketch called "Lord Ivon and his Daughter" ; and a copious selection from Willis's earlier poems, most of which were previously familiar favorites of his countrymen. In our comments upon these poems, we shall follow the order in which the author has seen fit to publish them.

Melanie is a simple tale, but very gracefully told. The scene is laid in Tivoli, and the story related, during a walk round the Cascatelles, by the hero of it, a lonely traveller, who has revisited Italy, and while gazing around him, upon scenes familiar to his eye under other and happier circumstances, narrates the incidents, on which the poem is founded. He had previously visited Italy, accompanied by a young and lovely sister, his only remaining relative. While wandering

among the beautiful scenes of that classical region, they meet by accident a young painter, between whom and the sister a sudden attachment springs up. The lonely wanderer feels his loneliness increased, and his sorrows deepened, by the near prospect of losing a sister so dear to him. This mood of mind is very happily conceived and gracefully described by the poet. The attachment is finally to be consummated by a marriage. On the morning of the appointed day, they repair to the convent of Saint Mona, where the bridal ceremonies are to be performed. Among the listeners there is a nun, whose profoundest attention is given to the sacred ceremonial ; suddenly she catches a view of the brother's face, and wildly asks, "De Brevern, is it thou?" The painter is the child of the nun, the offspring of her shame. The seducer was the father of De Brevern and his sister. The sudden horror of this *éclaircissement* is too much for the delicate frame of the lady, and she drops dead on the spot. Out of the incidents of this slight sketch, Mr. Willis has woven a very interesting tale. His verse has a smooth and melodious flow, well suited to the subject and the scene ; and the picture of human emotions is heightened by the graceful tracery of allusion and imagery, which the poet has skilfully thrown around it.

The following lines are exceedingly beautiful.

"We came to Italy. I felt
 A yearning for its sunny sky ;
 My very spirit seemed to melt
 As swept its first warm breezes by.
 From lip and cheek a chilling mist,
 From life and soul a frozen rime,
 By every breath seem'd softly kiss'd —
 God's blessing on its radiant clime !
 It was an endless joy to me
 To see my sister's new delight ;
 From Venice in its golden sea
 To Pæstum in its purple light,
 By sweet Val d'Arno's tinted hills,
 In Vallombrosa's convent-gloom,
 Mid Terni's vale of singing rills,
 By deathless lairs in solemn Rome,
 In gay Palermo's ' Golden Shell,'
 At Arethusa's hidden well —
 We loiter'd like the impassion'd sun
 That slept so lovingly on all,

And made a home of every one —
 Ruin, and fane, and waterfall ;
 And crown'd the dying day with glory
 If we had seen, since morn, but one old haunt of story.”
 — pp. 5, 6.

And the description of a spring morning at Tivoli, contained in the following lines, gives us a most lively feeling of its beauty.

“ It was a morn, of such a day
 As might have dawn'd on Eden first,
 Early in the Italian May ;
 Vine-leaf and flower had newly burst,
 And on the burthen of the air
 The breath of buds came faint and rare ;
 And far in the transparent sky
 The small, earth-keeping birds were seen
 Soaring deliriously high ;
 And through the clefts of newer green
 Yon waters dash'd their living pearls ;
 And with a gayer smile and bow
 Troop'd on the merry village girls ;
 And from the Contadino's brow
 The low-slouch'd hat was backward thrown,
 With air that scarcely seem'd his own ;
 And Melanie with lips apart,
 And clasped hands upon my arm,
 Flung open her impassion'd heart,
 And bless'd life's mere and breathing charm,
 And sang old songs, and gather'd flowers,
 And passionately bless'd once more life's thrilling hours.”
 — pp. 7, 8.

In a different strain, and on a higher theme, are the following exquisite lines.

“ But Melanie — I little dream'd
 What spells the stirring heart may move —
 Pygmalion's statue never seem'd
 More changed with life, than she with love.
 The pearl tint of the early dawn
 Flush'd into day-spring's rosy hue —
 The meek, moss-folded bud of morn
 Flung open to the light and dew —
 The first and half-seen star of even
 Wax'd clear amid the deepening heaven —

Similitudes perchance may be,
 But these are changes oftener seen,
 And do not image half to me
 My sister's change of face and mien.
 'T was written in her very air
 That love had passed and enter'd there."— pp. 14, 15.

"Lord Ivon and his Daughter" is a dramatic sketch of great beauty and power ; and the moral, we think, is very successfully evolved. It is, however, merely a sketch, and a rapid one. Lord Ivon calls his daughter to his side, and shows her a portrait ; the portrait of that daughter's mother. The dialogue proceeds, and Lord Ivon relates the events of his life. He was born a peasant ; but in early boyhood his latent ambition was roused by

" A book of poetry,
 With which he daily crept into the sun,
 To cheat sharp pain, with the bewildering dream
 Of beauty he had only read of then."

He resolved to better his condition, and wandered, with a proud heart beating beneath a minstrel's garb, to the lofty palace, which was afterwards his own. He became the favorite and attendant of the noble Lady Clare, the youthful and beautiful mistress of that splendid mansion. He falls desperately in love of course, and his manner of declaring his passion is described in the following spirited lines.

" A summer, and a winter, and a spring,
 Went over me like brief and noteless hours.
 For ever at the side of one who grew
 With every morn more beautiful ; the slave,
 Willing and quick, of every idle whim ;
 Singing for no one's bidding but her own,
 And then a song from my own passionate heart,
 Sung with a lip of fire, but ever named
 As an old rhyme that I had chanced to hear ;
 Riding beside her, sleeping at her door,
 Doing her maddest bidding at the risk
 Of life — what marvel if at last I grew
 Presumptuous ?

" A messenger one morn
 Spurr'd through the gate — ' A revel at the court !
 And many minstrels, come from many lands,
 Will try their harps in presence of the king ;

And 't is the royal pleasure that my lord
Come with the young and lovely Lady Clare,
Rob'd as the Queen of Faery, who shall crown
The victor with his bays.'

“Pass over all
To that bewildering day. She sat enthroned
Amid the court; and never twilight star
Sprung with such sweet surprise upon the eye,
As she with her rare beauty on the gaze
Of the gay multitude. The minstrels changed
Their studied songs, and chose her for a theme;
And ever at the pause all eyes upturn'd
And fed upon her loveliness.

“The last
Long lay was ended, and the silent crowd
Waited the king's award, when suddenly
The sharp strings of a lyre were swept without,
And a clear voice claim'd hearing for a bard
Belated on his journey. Mask'd, and clad
In a long stole, the herald led me in.
A thousand eyes were on me, but I saw
The new-throned queen, in her high place, alone;
And, kneeling at her feet, I pressed my brow
Upon her footstool, till the images
Of my past hours rush'd thick upon my brain;
Then, rising hastily, I struck my lyre;
And, in a story woven of my own,
I so did paint her in her loveliness —
Pouring my heart all out upon the lines
I knew too faithfully, and lavishing
The hoarded fire of a whole age of love
Upon each passionate word, that, as I sunk
Exhausted at the close, the ravish'd crowd
Flung gold and flowers on my still quivering lyre;
And the moved monarch in his gladness swore
There was no boon beneath his kingly crown
Too high for such a minstrel!

“Did my star
Speak in my fainting ear? Heard I the king?
Or did the audible pulses of my heart
Seem to me so articulate? I rose,
And tore my mask away; and, as the stole
Dropped from my shoulders, I glanced hurriedly

A look upon the face of Lady Clare.
 It was enough! I saw that she was changed;
 That a brief hour had chilled the open child
 To calculating woman; that she read
 With cold displeasure my o'er-daring thought;
 And on that brow, to me as legible
 As stars to the rapt Arab, I could trace
 The scorn that waited on me! Sick of life,
 Yet, even then, with a half-rallied hope
 Prompting my faltering tongue, I blindly knelt,
 And claim'd the king's fair promise —

ISIDORE.

For the hand

Of Lady Clare?

LORD IVON.

No, sweet one — for a sword." — pp. 36 – 39.

After this he went to the wars, and returned with brilliant renown, having performed miracles of valor; but returned, only to be pitied by her, the hope of whose favor had spurred him desperately on.

"She knew her sometime minion,
 And felt that she should never be adored
 With such idolatry as his, and sighed
 That hearts so true beat not in palaces.
 But I was poor with all my bright renown,
 And lowly born; and she — the Lady Clare!"

His wanderings were again renewed in search of wealth. Twenty years after he stood, an old man, at the same palace gate.

"I had been a slave
 For gold that time. My star had wrought with me,
 And I was richer than the wizard king,
 Throned in the mines of Ind. I could not look
 On my innumerable gems, the glare
 Pain'd so my sun-struck eyes. My gold was countless."

He met upon the threshold, not the Lady Clare, but her young and lovely daughter.

"Her very self — all youth, all loveliness;
 So like the fresh-kept picture in my brain,
 That for a moment I forgot all else,

And staggered back and wept. She passed me by
With a cold look —”

He proceeds to describe the change that his boundless wealth had wrought in the manner of Lady Clare towards him.

“ But what a change
Waited me here! My thin and grizzled locks
Were fairer now than the young minstrel’s curls;
My sun-burnt visage and contracted eye
Than the gay soldier in his gallant mien;
My words were wit, my looks interpreted,
And Lady Clare — I tell you, Lady Clare
Leaned fondly — fondly! on my wasted arm.
O God! how changed my nature with all this!
I, that had been all love and tenderness, —
The truest and most gentle heart, till now,
That ever beat, — grew suddenly a devil!
I bought me lands, and titles, and received
Men’s homage with a smooth hypocrisy;
And — you will scarce believe me, Isidore —
I suffered them to wile their peerless daughter,
The image and the pride of Lady Clare,
To wed me!

ISIDORE.

Sir! you did not!

LORD IVON.

“ Ay! I saw
Th’ indignant anger when her mother first
Broke the repulsive wish, and the degrees
Of shuddering reluctance, as her mind
Admitted the intoxicating tales
Of wealth unlimited. And when she look’d
On my age-stricken features, and my form,
Wasted before its time, and turned away
To hide from me her tears, her very mother
Whispered the cursed comfort in her ear
That made her what she is!

ISIDORE.

“ You could not wed her,
Knowing all this!

LORD IVON.

I felt that I had lost
My life else. I had wrung, for forty years,
My frame to its last withers; I had flung
My boyhood's fire away — the energy
Of a most sinless youth — the toil, and fret,
And agony of manhood. I had dared,
Fought, suffered, slaved — and never for an hour
Forgot or swerved from my resolve; and now —
With the delirious draught upon my lips —
Dash down the cup!

ISIDORE.

Yet *she* had never wrong'd you!

LORD IVON.

Thou 'rt pleading for thy mother, my sweet child!
And angels hear thee. But if she was wrong'd,
The sin be on the pride that sells its blood
Coldly and only for this damning gold.
Had I not offered youth first? Came I not
With my hands brimm'd with glory to buy love —
And was I not denied?

ISIDORE.

Yet, dearest father,
They forced her not to wed?

LORD IVON.

I called her back
Myself from the church threshold, and, before
Her mother and her kinsmen, bade her swear
It was her own free choice to marry me.
I showed her my shrunk hand, and bade her think
If that was like a bridegroom, and beware
Of perjuring her chaste and spotless soul,
If now she loved me not.

ISIDORE.

What said she, sir?

LORD IVON.

Oh! they had made her even as themselves;
And her young heart was colder than the slab
Unsun'd beneath Pentelicus. She pressed
My withered fingers in her dewy clasp,

And smiled up in my face, and chid ' my lord '
For his wild fancies, and led on !

ISIDORE.

And no
Misgiving at the altar ?

LORD IVON.

None ! She swore
To love and cherish me till death should part us,
With a voice clear as mine.

ISIDORE.

And kept it, father !
In mercy tell me so !

LORD IVON.

She lives, my daughter !

* * * *

Long ere my babe was born, my pride had ebb'd,
And let my heart down to its better founts
Of tenderness. I had no friends — not one !
My love gush'd to my wife. I rack'd my brain
To find her a new pleasure every hour —
Yet not with me — I fear'd to haunt her eye !
Only at night, when she was slumbering
In all her beauty, I would put away
The curtains till the pale night-lamp shone on her,
And watch her through my tears.

One night her lips

Parted as I gazed on them, and the name
Of a young noble, who had been my guest,
Stole forth in broken murmurs. I let fall
The curtains silently, and left her there
To slumber and dream on ; and, gliding forth
Upon the terrace, knelt to my pale star,
And swore, that if it pleased the God of light
To let me look upon the unborn child
Lying beneath her heart, I would but press
One kiss upon its lips, and take away
The life that was a blight upon her years.

ISIDORE.

I was that child ! ”

— pp. 45 - 50.

After his daughter's birth, he had prepared to execute his purpose ; but the catastrophe is described in the following lines.

“ Yes — and I heard the cry
 Of thy small ‘ piping mouth ’ as ’t were a call
 From my remembering star. I waited only
 Thy mother’s strength to bear the common shock
 Of death within the doors. She rose at last,
 And, oh ! so sweetly pale ! And thou, my child !
 My heart misgave me as I looked upon thee.
 But he was ever at her side whose name
 She murmur’d in her sleep ; and, lingering on
 To drink a little of thy sweetness more
 Before I died, I watched their stolen love
 As she had been my daughter, with a pure,
 Passionless joy that I should leave her soon
 To love him as she would. I know not how
 To tell thee more. * * *

* * * Come, sweet ! she is not worthy
 Of tears like thine and mine. * * *

* * * She fled and left me
 The very night ! The poison was prepared —
 And she had been a widow with the morn
 Rich as Golconda. As the midnight chimed
 My star rose. Gazing on its mounting orb,
 I raised the chalice — but a weakness came
 Over my heart ; and taking up the lamp,
 I glided to her chamber, and remov’d
 The curtains for a last, a parting look
 Upon my child. * * *

* * * Had she but taken thee,
 I could have felt she had a mother’s heart,
 And drain’d the chalice still. I could not leave
 My babe alone in such a heartless world !

ISIDORE.

Thank God ! Thank God ! ”

— pp. 51, 52.

This poem shows, we think, very considerable dramatic power. The character of old Lord Ivon is well conceived, and the gradual developement of it, as shown in his narration to his daughter, is admirably executed. The sketch points out a feudal and romantic age, the characteristics of which are well hit off, and the sentiments naturally and beautifully expressed. The influence of youthful ambition on a susceptible

mind, chained down to the vulgar walks of life ; the uncontrollable ardor of an aspiring passion, kindled by patrician beauty in a low-born though poetic bosom ; and the outpouring of that passion by the disguised minstrel at the court revel, are all admirable in their way. The blank verse, in which this sketch is written, is delicately and harmoniously constructed ; and, being mostly narrative, is free from that occasional dimness, which weakens the effect of some of Willis's writings.

The remainder of this Part consists of shorter poems, of various degrees of merit. "Birth-day Verses," addressed to the poet's mother, are written in a tone of deep filial tenderness. The lines are free and flowing, and the language is marked by a natural and unaffected elegance, the appropriate and tasteful expression of the profoundest feelings of the heart.

"Florence Gray" is an elegant and graceful little poem, in which the recollection of a child at Rome mingles fancifully with the historic scenes among which the poet wandered.

The first poem in Part Second, is the "Dying Alchemist." The title indicates the tone and character of the piece. The struggling aspirations of the visionary after an unattainable object, and his despair when the death damp steals over his brow, and the icy chill reaches his heart, are powerfully conceived, and powerfully, nay painfully, described. The whole scene is full of horror. The next poem is one of those celebrated Scripture-pieces, which are almost unique in our literature, "The Leper." The description of the Judean noble, in the pride of his beauty and the glory of his youth, is drawn with a most skilful hand ; and then the coming on of the leprosy, and the contrast between the leper's present and his former state, are movingly described. We cannot forbear quoting the conclusion of the poem, which is conceived in Mr. Willis's best style.

"It was noon,
And Helon knelt beside a stagnant pool
In the lone wilderness, and bathed his brow,
Hot with the burning leprosy, and touched
The loathsome water to his fevered lips,
Praying that he might be so blest — to die!
Footsteps approached, and, with no strength to flee,
He drew the covering closer on his lip,
Crying 'Unclean! unclean!' and in the folds

Of the coarse sackcloth shrouding up his face,
 He fell upon the earth till they should pass.
 Nearer the stranger came, and bending o'er
 The leper's prostrate form, pronounced his name.
 'Helon!' — the voice was like the master-tone
 Of a rich instrument — most strangely sweet;
 And the dull pulses of disease awoke,
 And for a moment beat beneath the hot
 And leprous scales with a restoring thrill.
 'Helon! arise!' and he forgot his curse,
 And rose and stood before him.

“Love and awe
 Mingled in the regard of Helon's eye
 As he beheld the stranger. He was not
 In costly raiment clad, nor on his brow
 The symbol of a princely lineage wore;
 No followers at his back, nor in his hand
 Buckler, or sword, or spear — yet in his mien
 Command sat throned serene, and, if he smiled,
 A kingly condescension graced his lips,
 The lion would have crouched to, in his lair.
 His garb was simple, and his sandals worn;
 His stature modelled with a perfect grace;
 His countenance, the impress of a God
 Touched with the open innocence of a child;
 His eye was blue and calm, as is the sky
 In the serenest noon; his hair unshorn
 Fell to his shoulders; and his curling beard
 The fulness of perfected manhood bore.
 He looked on Helon earnestly awhile,
 As if his heart was moved, and, stooping down,
 He took a little water in his hand
 And laid it on his brow, and said, 'Be clean!'
 And lo! the scales fell from him, and his blood
 Coursed with delicious coolness through his veins,
 And his dry palms grew moist, and on his brow
 The dewy softness of an infant stole.
 His leprosy was cleansed, and he fell down
 Prostrate at Jesus' feet, and worshipped him.”

— pp. 89 – 91.

“Parrhasius” is founded on a story told in Burton's
 “Anatomy of Melancholy,” of an Athenian painter, who bought
 an aged captive, and subjected him to the most dreadful tor-
 tures, for the purpose of observing his expression and trans-

ferring it to the canvass. The subject is a shocking one ; and, though we feel the poet's genius, in the fearful minuteness and horrible distinctness, with which he goes through the scene (a scene from which we start back with shuddering), yet we must say we are sorry the poem was not left out of this edition.

The "Wife's Appeal" is a highly finished and delicate production. The scene is conceived in a style of brilliancy and beauty, which bear the closest scrutiny. The description of the study, in which a wealthy and accomplished gentleman is pondering over "a volume of old time" is perfect. The approach of "the wife," who is met at the entrance by "a graceful hound," the little incidents of the interview, and her appeal to his latent ambition, are represented in a very delicate manner. The passage containing the husband's reply, is in a high strain of poetry ; and the conclusion is full of touching sentiment, heightened by an impressive moral. He has yielded to his wife's appeal, and gone out among the throng of men, and now for the issue.

"A year —

And in his room again he sat alone.
His frame had lost its fulness in that time ;
His manly features had grown sharp and thin,
And from his lips the constant smile had faded.
Wild fires had burned the languor from his eye ;
The lids looked fevered, and the brow was bent
With an habitual frown. He was much changed.
His chin was resting on his clenched hand,
And with his foot he beat upon the floor
Unconsciously the time of a sad tune.
Thoughts of the past preyed on him bitterly.
He had won power and held it. He had walked
Steadily upward in the eye of Fame,
And kept his truth unsullied — but his home
Had been invaded by envenomed tongues ;
His wife — his spotless wife — had been assailed
By slander, and his child had grown afraid
To come to him — his manner was so stern.
He could not speak beside his own hearth freely.
His friends were half estranged, and vulgar men
Presumed upon their services and grew
Familiar with him. He 'd small time to sleep,
And none to pray ; and, with his heart in fetters,

He bore deep insults silently, and bowed
 Respectfully to men who knew he loathed them!
 And when his heart was eloquent with truth,
 And love of country and an honest zeal
 Burned for expression, he could find no words
 They would not misinterpret with their lies.
 What were his many honors to him now?
 The good half doubted, falsehood was so strong —
 His home was hateful with its cautious fears —
 His wife lay trembling on his very breast
 Frighted with calumny! — And this is **FAME.**"

— pp. 112, 113.

"The Scholar of Thebet Ben Khorat" contains a good deal of wild, impassioned poetry, touched with an Oriental hue, that appeals strongly to the imagination. But we must pass on to the "Healing of the Daughter of Jairus." This is another of those "Scripture-pieces" of which we have spoken. The opening of this poem is exceedingly fine.

"Freshly the cool breath of the coming eve
 Stole through the lattice, and the dying girl
 Felt it upon her forehead. She had lain
 Since the hot noontide in a breathless trance,
 Her thin pale fingers clasp'd within the hand
 Of the heart-broken Ruler, and her breast,
 Like the dead marble, white and motionless.
 The shadow of a leaf lay on her lips,
 And as it stirr'd with the awakening wind,
 The dark lids lifted from her languid eyes,
 And her slight fingers mov'd, and heavily
 She turn'd upon her pillow. He was there —
 The same lov'd, tireless watcher, and she look'd
 Into his face until her sight grew dim
 With the fast-falling tears, and, with a sigh
 Of tremulous weakness, murmuring his name,
 She gently drew his hand upon her lips,
 And kiss'd it as she wept. The old man sunk
 Upon his knees, and in the drapery
 Of the rich curtains buried up his face —
 And when the twilight fell, the silken folds
 Stirr'd with his prayer, but the slight hand he held
 Had ceased its pressure, and he could not hear
 In the dead, utter silence, that a breath
 Came through her nostrils, and her temples gave

To his nice touch no pulse, and at her mouth
 He held the lightest curl that on her neck
 Lay with a mocking beauty, and his gaze
 Ach'd with its deathly stillness." — pp. 130, 131.

And the passage following immediately upon this, containing a description of the scene, in which the Ruler found Jesus teaching, is finished with exquisite beauty. The conclusion of the poem is a perfect picture.

" Like a form
 Of matchless sculpture in her sleep she lay —
 The linen vesture folded on her breast,
 And over it her white transparent hands,
 The blood still rosy in their tapering nails.
 A line of pearl ran through her parted lips,
 And in her nostrils, spiritually thin,
 The breathing curve was mockingly like life,
 And round beneath the faintly tinted skin
 Ran the light branches of the azure veins —
 And on her cheek the jet lash overlay
 Matching the arches pencill'd on her brow.
 Her hair had been unbound, and falling loose
 Upon her pillow, hid her small round ears
 In curls of glossy blackness, and about
 Her polished neck, scarce touching it, they hung
 Like airy shadows floating as they slept.
 'T was heavenly beautiful. The Saviour rais'd
 Her hand from off her bosom, and spread out
 The snowy fingers in his palm, and said
 '*Maiden! Arise!*' — and suddenly a flush
 Shot o'er her forehead, and along her lips
 And through her cheek the rallied color ran,
 And the still outline of her graceful form
 Stirr'd in the linen vesture, and she clasp'd
 The Saviour's hand, and fixing her dark eyes
 Full on his beaming countenance — AROSE!"

— pp. 135, 136.

The address "To a City Pigeon," is one of the sweetest poems in the volume. The train of thought running through it is delightfully refreshing. The metrical flow is rich, and fills the mind with a sense of surpassing melody. The poem "On a Picture of a Beautiful Boy," is in a very different, but an exceedingly beautiful strain. The following, "On the Picture of a 'Child tired of Play,'" we think absolutely faultless.

“Tired of play! Tired of play!
 What hast thou done this livelong day?
 The birds are silent, and so is the bee;
 The sun is creeping up steeple and tree;
 The doves have flown to the sheltering eaves,
 And the nests are dark with the drooping leaves,
 Twilight gathers, and day is done —
 How hast thou spent it — restless one!

“Playing? But what hast thou done beside
 To tell thy mother at even tide?
 What promise of morn is left unbroken?
 What kind word to thy playmate spoken?
 Whom hast thou pitied, and whom forgiven?
 How with thy faults has duty striven?
 What hast thou learned by field and hill,
 By greenwood path, and by singing rill?
 “There will come an eve to a longer day,
 That will find thee tired — but not with play!
 And thou wilt lean, as thou leanest now,
 With drooping limbs and an aching brow,
 And wish the shadows would faster creep,
 And long to go to thy quiet sleep.
 Well were it then if thine aching brow
 Were as free from sin and shame as now!
 Well for thee, if thy lip could tell
 A tale like this, of a day spent well.
 If thine open hand hath reliev'd distress —
 If thy pity hath sprung to wretchedness —
 If thou hast forgiven the sore offence,
 And humbled thy heart with penitence —
 If Nature's voices have spoken to thee
 With their holy meanings eloquently —
 If every creature hath won thy love,
 From the creeping worm to the brooding dove,
 If never a sad, low-spoken word
 Hath plead with thy human heart unheard —
 Then, when the night steals on as now,
 It will bring relief to thine aching brow,
 And, with joy and peace at the thought of rest,
 Thou wilt sink to sleep on thy mother's breast.”

— pp. 142 – 144.

We pass over two or three little poems, breathing the finest spirit of grace and beauty, for the sake of extracting the beginning of one addressed to “The Belfry Pigeon.”

The thoughts and images are exquisitely natural, and the language cannot be surpassed.

"On the cross beam under the Old South bell
The nest of a pigeon is builded well.
In summer and winter that bird is there,
Out and in with the morning air.
I love to see him track the street,
With his wary eye and active feet;
And I often watch him as he springs,
Circling the steeple with easy wings,
Till across the dial his shade has passed,
And the belfry edge is gained at last.
'T is a bird I love, with its brooding note,
And the trembling throb in its mottled throat;
There's a human look in its swelling breast,
And the gentle curve of its lowly crest;
And I often stop with the fear I feel —
He runs so close to the rapid wheel.

"Whatever is rung on that noisy bell —
Chime of the hour, or funeral knell —
The dove in the belfry must hear it well.
When the tongue swings out to the midnight moon —
When the sexton cheerly rings for noon —
When the clock strikes clear at morning light —
When the child is waked with "nine at night" —
When the chimes play soft in the Sabbath air,
Filling the spirit with tones of prayer —
Whatever tale in the bell is heard,
He broods on his folded feet unstirred,
Or rising half in his rounded nest,
He takes the time to smooth his breast,
Then drops again with filmed eyes,
And sleeps as the last vibration dies." — pp. 158 – 160.

The conclusion of the poem we do not like. It is prettily expressed, but the sentiment is not only unmanly in itself, but out of keeping with the preceding part, and with all the associations of the subject.

The "Blind Mother," the "Stolen Ring," and the lines addressed to the poet's mother from the Apennines, abound in fine images, and melodious expression; but we have no space for a particular criticism on each of them; and we pass now to the third and last division of the poems. This part contains a selection from Mr. Willis's early poems, and on

some accounts is the most interesting portion of the volume.

"The Shunamite" is a beautiful poem, founded on the simple and affecting story in the second book of Kings. The whole scene, in its minutest and most touching circumstances, stands before us. We feel the heat of the "sultry day of summer time." We feel

"As if the air had fainted, and the pulse
Of nature had run down, and ceased to beat."

How finished is the following picture.

"'Thy father is athirst' — and from the depths
Of the cool well under the leaning tree,
She drew refreshing water, and with thoughts
Of God's sweet goodness stirring in her heart,
She bless'd her beautiful boy, and to his way
Committed him. And he went lightly on,
With his soft hands press'd closely to the cool
Stone vessel, and his little naked feet
Lifted with watchful care, and o'er the hills,
And through the light green hollows, where the lambs
Go for the tender grass, he kept his way,
Wiling its distance with his simple thoughts,
Till, in the wilderness of sheaves, with brows
Throbbing with heat, he set his burthen down." — p. 174.

The following scene presents us with a touching picture of maternal distress, over a dying child.

"They bore him to his mother, and he lay
Upon her knees till noon — and then he died!
She had watch'd every breath, and kept her hand
Soft on his forehead, and gazed in upon
The dreamy languor of his listless eye,
And she had laid back all his sunny curls,
And kiss'd his delicate lip, and lifted him
Into her bosom, till her heart grew strong —
His beauty was so unlike death! She leaned
Over him now, that she might catch the low
Sweet music of his breath, that she had learn'd
To love when he was slumbering at her side
In his unconscious infancy —

— "'So still!

'T is a soft sleep! How beautiful he lies,
With his fair forehead, and the rosy veins

Playing so freshly in his sunny check !
How could they say that he would die ! Oh God !
I could not lose him ! I have treasured all
His childhood in my heart, and even now,
As he has slept, my memory has been there,
Counting like treasures all his winning ways —
His unforgotten sweetness : —

— “ ‘ Yet so still ! —

How like this breathless slumber is to death !
I could believe that in that bosom now
There were no pulse — it beats so languidly !
I cannot see it stir ; but his red lip !
Death would not be so very beautiful !
And that half smile — would death have left *that* there ?
— And should I not have felt that he would die ?
And have I not wept over him ? — and prayed
Morning and night for him ? and *could* he die ? —
— No — God will keep him ! He will be my pride
Many long years to come, and this fair hair
Will darken like his father's, and his eye
Be of a deeper blue when he is grown ;
And he will be so tall, and I shall look
With such a pride upon him ! *He* to die ! ’
And the fond mother lifted his soft curls,
And smiled, as if 't were mockery to think
That such fair things could perish —

— Suddenly

Her hand shrunk from him, and the color fled
From her fix'd lip, and her supporting knees
Were shook beneath her child. Her hand had touch'd
His forehead, as she dallied with his hair —
And it was cold — like clay ! Slow, very slow,
Came the misgiving that her child was dead.
She sat a moment, and her eyes were clos'd
In a dumb prayer for strength, and then she took
His little hand and press'd it earnestly —
And put her lip to his — and look'd again
Fearfully on him — and then, bending low,
She whisper'd in his ear, ‘ My son ! — My son ! ’
And as the echo died, and not a sound
Broke on the stillness, and he lay there still
Motionless on her knee — the truth *would* come !
And with a sharp, quick cry, as if her heart
Were crush'd, she lifted him and held him close

Into her bosom — with a mother's thought —
As if death had no power to touch him there! "

— pp. 175- 178.

"Absalom" is another fine delineation of a Scripture theme. The introductory lines contain an exquisitely worded night-piece, ending with this noble thought.

"How strikingly the course of nature tells,
By its light heed of human suffering,
That it was fashioned for a happier world."

The description of King David's mourning for his lost son, the princely rebel Absalom; the sketch of Absalom, as he lay "straightened for the grave"; and the lament of David over the dead body; are conceived and uttered in a tone of lofty poetry.

"Hagar in the Wilderness" is almost the finest poem in the volume. It is wrought up to a higher point of elaboration, is full of higher passion, and flows with more earnestness and freedom, than the others. It has, indeed, the germ of a tragedy. It delineates wounded affections, and blighted love, and deep despair. An injured woman, sent abroad to suffer and perhaps to die; with a son reduced to all the woes of orphanage, while his father yet lives; the sinking heart of a helpless and deserted one; these are the themes, which fill this magnificent piece with a surpassing interest. The descriptive passages are finished with a more than usual skill; they are introduced with a more delicate perception of propriety; and the whole poem is wrought up with a finer sense of proportion, than any of the other pieces we have spoken of. The following passage, in energy of expression, and force of passion, reminds us of the *Medea* of Euripides.

"Should Hagar weep? May slighted woman turn,
And as a vine the oak hath shaken off,
Bend lightly to her leaning trust again?
O no! by all her loveliness — by all
That makes life poetry and beauty, no!
Make her a slave; steal from her rosy cheek
By needless jealousies; let the last star
Leave her a watcher by your couch of pain;
Wrong her by petulance, suspicion, all
That makes her cup a bitterness — yet give
One evidence of love, and earth has not

An emblem of devotedness like hers.
 But, oh! estrange her once — it boots not how —
 By wrong or silence, any thing that tells
 A change has come upon your tenderness, —
 And there is not a high thing out of heaven
 Her pride o'ermastereth not." — p. 188.

"The Widow of Nain" is the last of the Scripture pieces. It is marked by the same characteristics as the others; fine description, delicate imagery, and minuteness of finish. We quote the following beautiful lines.

"'T was now high noon.
 The dull, low murmur of a funeral
 Went through the city — the sad sound of feet
 Unmix'd with voices — and the sentinel
 Shook off his slumber, and gazed earnestly
 Up the wide street along whose paved way
 The silent throng crept slowly. They came on,
 Bearing a body heavily on its bier,
 And by the crowd that in the burning sun
 Walk'd with forgetful sadness, 't was of one
 Mourn'd with uncommon sorrow. The broad gate
 Swung on its hinges, and the Roman bent
 His spear-point downwards as the bearers pass'd
 Bending beneath their burthen. There was one —
 Only one mourner. Close behind the bier
 Crumpling the pall up in her wither'd hands,
 Follow'd an aged woman. Her short steps
 Falter'd with weakness, and a broken moan
 Fell from her lips, thicken'd convulsively
 As her heart bled afresh. The pitying crowd
 Follow'd apart, but no one spake to her.
 She had no kinsmen. She had lived alone —
 A widow with one son. He was her all —
 The only tie she had in the wide world —
 And he was dead. They could not comfort her."

— pp. 194, 195.

The remainder of the volume is filled with shorter pieces, delicate trifles, which are all familiar to American readers of occasional poetry. "The Annoyer" is an exquisite little song, and universally popular in the musical circles. "André's Request to Washington" is remarkable for a terseness of expression, beyond any other in the collection.

We have thus gone over Mr. Willis's *Poems* in a cursory

manner. The passages we have cited, prove the truth, we trust, of the praises we have bestowed upon them. Upon a general view of these poems, we think we are justified in pronouncing Mr. Willis a poet of great and varied powers. In some attributes of the poetic character, we should hardly know where to look for his superior. His sensibility to beauty, whether of external nature, or of the human form, is ever alive. He enjoys richly and freely the breath of heaven, the sunshine, and the splendor of the star-crowned night; earth and sky are perpetual ministers to his imagination. His language is almost always choice, and descriptive. By the power of finely selected words, he brings every variety of landscape before us; and the myriad voices of Nature seem to be uttered in his magical tones. Such is the richness, so captivating the sweetness of his verse, that many readers fail to discover the depth, variety, and power of his poetry. There is sometimes an over-daintiness of expression, that naturally enough makes a fastidious delicacy, rather than strength, to be regarded as his leading characteristic. But if we do not greatly err, the passages we have cited, bear incontestable evidence of the vigor and variety, as well as delicacy, of Mr. Willis's poetical genius. The dramatic sketch of "Lord Ivon and his Daughter," and the Scripture piece, "Hagar in the Wilderness," show his power of entering into, and nobly expressing, the higher passions of human nature. Still it must be acknowledged, that Mr. Willis has too strong an inclination for finely turned lines, and repeats too often a few favorite expressions. It must also be conceded, that fine phraseology sometimes, though rarely, tempts him away from the beaten path of distinct meaning. But this fault, Mr. Willis has in common with the most distinguished poets of England; in fact it belongs to the poetical character of the times. In other respects, his language is possessed of extraordinary beauty. In simplicity, force, and freshness, in descriptive power, and in the elegant blending of the Saxon and Latin elements of English, we know not where we should look for a style superior to it. In brilliancy of imagination, richness and variety of associations, and delicate transitions from the description of natural scenery, to human passions connected with it or breaking out in the midst of it, or to simple emotions growing out of the contemplation of it; in a nice feeling of just proportion, and a quick eye for small traits which individualize a

scene or a person ; and in an ever-varying richness of melody, the poetry of Mr. Willis may be compared to advantage with almost any writings of this age.

“*Pencillings by the Way*” is a very spirited book. The letters, out of which it is constructed, were written originally for the New York “*Mirror*,” and were not intended for distinct publication. From this circumstance, the author indulged in a freedom of personal detail, which we must say is wholly unjustifiable, and we have no wish to defend it. This book does not pretend to contain any profound observations or discussions on national character, political condition, literature, or even art. It would be obviously impossible to carry any one of these topics thoroughly out, without spending vastly more time and labor upon it, than a rambling poet is likely to have the inclination to do. In fact, there are very few men, who are qualified, by the nature of their previous studies, to do this with any degree of edification to their readers. But a man of general intellectual culture, especially if he have the poetical imagination superadded, may give us rapid sketches of other countries, which will both entertain and instruct us. Now this book is precisely such an one as we have here indicated. The author travelled through Europe, mingling largely in society, and visited whatever scenes were interesting to him as an American, a scholar, and a poet. The impressions which these scenes made upon his mind, are described in these volumes ; and we must say, we have rarely fallen in with a book of a more sprightly character, a more elegant and graceful style, and full of more lively descriptions. The delineations of manners are executed with great tact ; and the shifting pictures of natural scenery pass before us as we read, exciting a never-ceasing interest. As to the personalities which have excited the wrath of British critics, we have, as we said before, no wish to defend them ; but a few words upon the tone, temper, and motives of those gentlemen, in their dealing with our author, will not, perhaps, be considered inappropriate.

It is a notorious fact, that British criticism, for many years past, has been, to a great extent, free from all the restraints of a regard to literary truth. Assuming the political creed of an author, it would be a very easy thing to predict the sort of criticism his writings would meet with, in any or all of the leading periodicals of the kingdom. This tendency

has been carried so far, that even discussions of points in ancient classical literature have been shaped and colored by it. Thus, Aristophanes' comedies are turned against modern democracy, and Pindar, the Theban Eagle, has been unceremoniously classed with British Tories, by the London Quarterly. Instead of inquiring "What is the author's object? How far has he accomplished it? How far is that object worthy of approbation?" — three questions that are essential to all just criticism; the questions put by English Reviewers are substantially "What party does he belong to? Is he a Whig, Tory, Radical, or is he an American?" And the sentence in such cases depends on the answer to them. Even where British criticism is favorable to an American author, its tone is likely to be haughty and insulting; like the language of a condescending city gentleman towards some country cousin, whom he is kind enough to honor with his patronage.

Now, to critics of this sort, Mr. Willis was a tempting mark. No one can for a moment believe that the London Quarterly, Frazer's Magazine, and Capt. Maryatt's monthly, are honest in the language they hold towards Mr. Willis. Motives, wide enough from a love of truth, guided the conduct of these journals. The editor of the London Quarterly, it is well known, is the author of "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," a work full of personalities, ten times more objectionable than any thing to be found in the "Pencilings." Yet this same editor did not blush to write and print a long and most abusive tirade upon the American traveller, for doing what he had himself done to a much greater and more reprehensible extent; and, to cap the climax of inconsistency, republished in his journal the very personalities, names and all, which had so shocked his delicate sensibilities. It is much more likely that a disrespectful notice of the London Quarterly and its editor, in these "Pencilings," was the source from which this bitterness flowed, than that any sense of literary justice dictated the harsh review. Another furious attack on Mr. Willis's book appeared in the monthly journal, under the editorial management of Captain Maryatt, the author of a series of very popular sea novels. Whoever was the author of that article, ought to be held disgraced in the opinions of all honorable men. It is the most extraordinary tissue of insolence and coarseness, with one exception, that we have ever seen, in any periodical which pretended to respectability of literary

character. It carries its grossness to the intolerable length of attacking the private character of Mr. Willis, and throwing out foolish sneers about his birth and parentage. It is this article which led to the well-known correspondence, between the American Poet and the British Captain, ending in a hostile meeting. It is to be regretted that Mr. Willis should so far forget the principles of his New England education, as to participate in a duel. We regard the practice with horror ; we believe it not only wicked, but absurd. We cannot possibly see how Mr. Willis's tarnished fame could be brightened by the superfluous work of putting an additional quantity of lead into the gallant captain. But there is, perhaps, no disputing about tastes ; and, bad as we think the whole affair was, no candid man can read the correspondence without feeling that Mr. Willis's part of it is infinitely superior to the Captain's, in style, sense, dignity of feeling, and manly honor.

Besides these, Frazer's Magazine must needs open on Willis its batteries of abuse, and the review of the "Pencillings" in this journal is the one exception to which we alluded above. The reading public has long been subjected to the perpetrations of that print, for some general sin of unknown enormity. We may truly say, that there are few things more disgraceful to the literary taste of this age, than the continued existence of that abomination. It is high Tory in politics ; that, however, is well enough ; at least we will not complain of it. But, in addition to this, it is an exaggeration of the very worst parts of Blackwood's ; it has not even the merit of originality. As to any *principle* of literary criticism, the reader will look in vain over the dreary waste of its pages, for any indication of such a thing. We must except a few papers, that have occasionally appeared,—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*,—from these remarks. A sketch of Goethe's "Tasso," that we remember to have read in it some time ago, is a beautiful piece of literary discussion. But, in general, its wit is buffoonery ; its satire is virulent and personal ; its language belongs to no recognised form of the speech of a civilized people. In the review of Willis, there is a concentration of all these pleasing qualities of style. That paper abounds in phraseology, that no gentleman admits into his vocabulary. Its severity consists in the very witty and original device of calling nick-names. Now can this be considered criticism ? Does any man in his senses

read, with any degree of trust, opinions expressed in such a style, by such a journal? In fact, the character of that journal for dishonest dealing in literature is notorious. Our readers will remember, that not very long ago, an English court of law awarded to Mr. Alaric A. Watts pretty heavy damages, in a suit brought by him against its conductor, for a fraudulent attack on his literary reputation. The attack was no more or less than a forgery, printed in that journal as the production of Mr. Watts, in which his style and manner were held up to ridicule.

We have no wish, that Mr. Willis, or any other American writer, should be sheltered from criticism. Every man, who ventures before the public with a book, ought to be held to the severest responsibility. We care not how sharply he may be dealt with. But there ought to be some recognised principle, stated or implied, in the criticism; and the language ought not to be such as would disgrace the carousers of a pot-house.

But to return to the work from which we have been partially drawn aside. Its merits in point of style are unquestionable. It is written in a simple, vigorous, and highly descriptive form of English, and rivets the reader's attention throughout. There are passages in it of graphic eloquence, which it would be difficult to surpass from the writings of any other tourist whatever. The topics our author selects, are, as has been already stated, not those which require long and careful study to appreciate and discuss; they are such as the poetic eye would naturally dwell upon, and a poetic hand rapidly delineate, in a cursory survey of foreign lands. Occasionally, we think, Mr. Willis enters too minutely into the details of the horrible. Some of his descriptions of the cholera, and the pictures he gives us of the catacombs of the dead, are ghastly. But the manners of society he draws with admirable tact; and personal peculiarities of distinguished men, he renders with a most life-like vivacity. Many of his descriptions of natural scenery are more like pictures, than sketches in words. The description of the Bay of Naples will occur as a good example.

It would be impossible to point out, with any degree of particularity, the many passages in this book whose beauty deserves attention. But it may be remarked in general, that the greater part of the first volume is not so fresh and various

and animated, as the second. This we suppose arises partly from the fact that France and Italy have long been beaten ground ; but Greece and Asia Minor have a newness of interest about them, which cannot but give more vigor and elasticity to a traveller's description. Mr. Willis's account of the Ionian Islands is exceedingly lively ; and his contrast between present scenes and classic associations is highly amusing.

We think most readers will find Mr. Willis's sketches of Turkish scenes and Turkish life the most entertaining parts of his book. They are written with great sprightliness, and will richly reward a careful perusal.

The last part of the book is a statement of the author's observations upon English life and society ; and it is this portion, which the English critics affect to be so deeply offended with. The most objectionable passage in this is the account of a dinner at Lady Blessington's. Unquestionably Mr. Moore's remarks about Mr. O'Connell ought not to have been reported, considering the time when, and the place where, they were uttered ; though they contain nothing new about the great Agitator, the secrets disclosed being well known to some millions of people who interest themselves in British politics, and read the British newspapers. We close our remarks on this work by referring our readers to a capital scene on board a Scotch steam-boat, and a breakfast at Professor Wilson's, the famous editor of Blackwood, both in the second volume, which we regret our inability to quote.

"Inklings of Adventure" is a collection of pieces, published originally in a London monthly journal. They purport to be the papers of Philip Slingsby, arranged and edited by Mr. Willis. As this Philip Slingsby is merely a *nom de guerre*, we must hold Mr. Willis responsible both for the thoughts and style, in spite of his disclaimer. In the preceding observations on Willis's writings, we have freely expressed the admiration we have felt, without yielding a whit to the prejudices or partialities of the day ; and we shall now express just as freely our disapprobation of many things in the volumes immediately under our observation.

There are many admirable passages in these "Inklings." The language is rich and varied ; many of the narratives are highly exciting ; and some of the characters are well drawn. But, so far as they are considered in

the light of delineations of *American* society, they must be pronounced unsuccessful. Considered in the light of tales and sketches, many of them are extravagant and improbable. They are colored falsely and glaringly ; character, incident, and catastrophe, in most of them, are out of keeping with American thought, American morals, and American life. But our most serious objection is, that many passages in them breathe a worldly and voluptuous spirit, which may be very taking to the imaginations of pert young gentlemen who affect *ennui* and disgust — the would-be *blasés* of American society ; but it must be condemned by every reader who cherishes a love of a hearty, sound, and moral national literature. We say this with regret, and in no over-prudish spirit. There are beauties, of the most exquisite sort, which will insure these volumes a wide circulation ; and we, in common with all the admirers of Willis's genius, cannot but lament that his brilliant and fascinating pen should have lent itself to the perpetuating of fashionable frivolities and a voluptuous tone of thinking.

We have spoken thus of what we consider the faults of the "*Inklings*." Of their numerous excellencies, their gorgeous descriptions, their brilliant wit, it is unnecessary to speak more at large ; they speak for themselves. We must content ourselves with merely referring to two short passages, the first, a description of Nahant, and the second a rich and daintily worded essay in the story of Edith Lindsay, in the first volume, as favorable specimens of the better parts of this book.

Every impartial reader must confess, that for so young a man, Mr. Willis has done much to promote the reputation of American literature. His position at present is surrounded with every incentive to a noble ambition. With youth and health, to sustain him under labor ; with much knowledge of the world, acquired by travel and observation, to draw upon ; with a mature style, and a hand practised in various forms of composition, Mr. Willis's genius ought to take a wider and higher range than it has ever done before. We trust we shall meet him again, ere long, in the paths of literature ; and we trust that he will take it kindly, if we express the hope, that he will lay aside those tendencies to exaggeration, and to an unhealthy tone of sentiment, which mar the beauty of some of his otherwise most agreeable books.
